

realism was visible elsewhere in the festival: Suetonius tells us (11.2) that in the production of Afranius' *Incendium*, the actors were allowed to keep whatever property they rescued from the burning building on stage. Though the incident surely says something about Nero's tastes (undoubtedly his approval was required for the Pasiphae ballet), more importantly Suetonius' account testifies clearly to widespread public reaction to and discussion of the performance.

A recent and shocking performance of the Pasiphae story was therefore in the public's visual memory as a result of Nero's Ludi Maximi. That performance had moreover a context, the great amphitheatre in the Campus Martius which was itself one of Nero's most spectacular and public achievements and had been the site of large-scale gladiatorial fights as well. The context of performance leads us back from the arena to Trimalchio's dinner table.

Petronius means his reader to read the iconography of the *capis* over Trimalchio's shoulder, as it were. The pleasure of the text here is for the reader to understand what Trimalchio cannot. Trimalchio's interpretation of the *scyphoi* shows that he mixes up the names of mythic characters, and the reader easily solves the first scene by mentally substituting the name of Medea for Trimalchio's 'Cassandra'. The *capis* is a trickier challenge, for one name (Daedalus) is correct, while two others (Niobe and the Trojan horse) are not, although the name of King Minos gives us a hint. The cups portraying the gladiatorial fights of Hermeros and Petraites, which require no correction,<sup>8</sup> supply a further clue by pointing toward the context of the amphitheatre. The fall of the boy acrobat two chapters later is an additional indicator pointing toward Nero's Ludi Maximi as the interpretive context.

Finally, while this interpretation of the scene on the *capis* should be a contribution to dating composition of the novel, it should *not* be taken as evidence for a simple equation of Trimalchio with Nero. Only within the context of an interpretation of the *Satyricon* as a whole and an understanding of its readership can we determine – if determine is the right word – whether Nero was part of the intended audience for Petronius' novel or not. Did Petronius intend Nero to be amused at Trimalchio's inability to see what was going on in the scene on his bowl, or did he think that Nero was such an egomaniac that he would not recognize himself in the lowly person of Trimalchio – or was the *Satyricon* never meant for Nero's eyes? The answers to these questions are left to the reader.<sup>9</sup>

Emory University

NIAL W. SLATER

<sup>8</sup> Hermeros is not as well attested as Petraites, but one first-century A.D. gladiator by this name is known: see Smith (above, n. 1), *ad loc.*

<sup>9</sup> I am grateful to my colleague Garth Tissol for his helpful criticisms of this note and his suggestion of a title.

#### DUCKS' EGGS IN STATIUS, *SILVAE* 4.9.30?

The ninth and last poem in Book 4 of the *Silvae* is an amusing hendecasyllabic piece in which Statius, addressing Plotius Grypus, reproves him for having sent him for the Saturnalia a tatty, second-hand copy of a boring book in return for the fine, expensive, new volume which was Statius' present to him. The poem includes a long list (lines 23–45) of humble and/or poor-quality items, any of which, it is suggested, would have been more acceptable than Grypus' gift. Included in the list are eggs:

non enlychnia sicca, non replictae  
bulborum tunicae, nec ova †tantum, †  
nec lenes alicae, nec asperum far? (29–31)

I quote the text printed by K. M. Coleman in her excellent edition of *Silvae* 4.<sup>1</sup> Although *tantum*, the reading of M, is retained by most modern editors, Coleman rightly insists that it 'cannot be forced to bear the requisite meaning "even"'.<sup>2</sup> Among the emendations proposed are *tota* (Turnebus), *tandem* (L. Polster),<sup>3</sup> *saltem* (E. Baehrens),<sup>4</sup> (*quantum!*) (J. P. Postgate),<sup>5</sup> and *tanti* (P. T. Eden).<sup>6</sup> None is convincing.

It is to be noted that most of the items in Statius' list, including the four mentioned with the eggs in 29–31, are given an epithet or defining genitive, or are otherwise described or particularized.<sup>7</sup> Indeed, if one leaves the eggs out of the reckoning, 22 out of 28<sup>8</sup> items are so treated. It is natural, therefore, in attempting to mend line 30, to look for an adjective, as Coleman suggests in her commentary, or for a defining genitive. *tantum* seems to point to a genitive plural, and I propose that Statius may have written *ova anatum*, 'ducks' eggs'.

*anatum* is the form of the genitive plural of *anas* found in Varro (*Rust.* 3.5.14; 3.11.1).<sup>9</sup> If my suggestion is right, the *i* was treated consonantly, so that the word was trisyllabic and the second syllable lengthened, as in Virgil, *G.* 1.482, where we have *flūviorum* for *flūvōrum*. The consonantizing of vowels for metrical convenience is not uncommon in Latin poets, and Statius consonantizes the first *i* in *semianimis* (*Theb.* 2.83; 3.187; 7.597; 8.597; *Achil.* 2.100) and *semianimus* (*Theb.* 6.220; 10.477, 547). A close parallel for a trisyllabic *anatum* is found in Ovid, *Met.* 15.718, which ends with a bisyllabic *Antium*.<sup>10</sup>

The palaeographical plausibility of *anatum* hardly needs demonstration. The corruption into *tantum* might have occurred either accidentally, or through deliberate alteration when someone attempted to 'correct' a word which was apparently unmetrical, whether the word was still *anatum* or had become *anatum*.

The contextual plausibility of *anatum* may be less obvious than its palaeographical plausibility, but is no less real. There is no surprise about the inclusion of eggs in Statius' list. Of the twenty-nine items mentioned nineteen are of food and drink, and, as Coleman points out,<sup>11</sup> eggs are among the *xenia* described by Martial (13.40). But

<sup>1</sup> Statius, *Silvae* IV (Oxford, 1988). I am much indebted to Professor Coleman for her generous assistance and encouragement with this note. I am grateful also to the editors of *CQ* for suggesting improvements.

<sup>2</sup> Cf. J. P. Postgate, 'Ad Silvas Stadianas silvula', *Philol.* N.F. 18 (1905), 130: 'dispicet iis tantum quibus placet Latinitas'.

<sup>3</sup> *Quaestionum Stadianarum particula i* (Wongrowitz, 1878), p. 8. Some editors attribute *tandem* to J. Markland, but in his edition (London, 1728) he prints *tantum* and, after mentioning Turnebus' conjecture *tota*, comments 'non opus ulla mutatione'.

<sup>4</sup> P. Papinii Statii *Silvae* (Leipzig, 1876).

<sup>5</sup> Loc. cit. W. A. Merrill, 'Notes on the *Silvae* of Statius, Book IV', *Univ. of Cal. Publ. in Class. Philol.* 5 no. 7 (February, 1920), 133, suggests (*tantum!*).

<sup>6</sup> *Mnemos.* 46 (1993), 379. Eden explains *tanti* as a gen. of price: 'are not even eggs worth so much (as to be suitable recompense)?'

<sup>7</sup> I include among these *Thebaicae* (26), *Caricae* (26), and *Lucanica* (35) – Theban dates, Carian figs, and Lucanian sausage.

<sup>8</sup> I have counted the cone of plums or figs (27–8) as one item.

<sup>9</sup> Elsewhere we find *anatum* (e.g. Plin. *N.H.* 10.155; 25.6; 30.60). In Cic. *D.N.D.* 2.124 the manuscripts offer *anatum*, *anatum*, and *anatum*, and in Columella 2.14.1 they give *anetis* as well as *anatis* (gen. sing.). *anites* occurs in Plaut. *Capt.* 1003 (nom. pl.) and Auson. 18.18.12 (acc. pl.).

<sup>10</sup> For other examples of synizesis, including cases involving consonantized vowels, see e.g. M. Platnauer, *Latin Elegiac Verse* (Cambridge, 1951), pp. 66–9; E. Norden on Virg. *A.* 6.33; O. Skutsch, *The Annals of Q. Ennius* (Oxford, 1985), p. 59. In *Silv.* 1.6.16, *largis gratuitum cadit rapinis*, the second word is presumably (in view of the hendecasyllabic metre) *grātūitum* rather than *grātūitum*; in *Theb.* 7.449 we may have either *fōrtūito* or *fōrtūito*.

<sup>11</sup> On *Silv.* 4.9.30.

why *ducks'* eggs? Because, I suggest, ducks' eggs were regarded as inferior to hens' eggs for eating. Although, so far as I am aware, no ancient source actually tells us that they were so regarded, the suggestion is not mere conjecture. It is a fact that ducks' eggs are less safe to eat than hens' eggs. Infection of an egg with *Salmonella* bacteria occurs either when the ovary itself is infected, so that the infection is already present in the egg before it is laid, or when organisms penetrate the shell after the egg has been laid. Ovarian transmission of food-poisoning types of *Salmonella* infection is much more common in ducks than in chickens.<sup>12</sup> Moreover, since ducks often return to their nests with their bellies and feet wet, their eggs are more likely than hens' eggs to experience the moist conditions which are favourable to the *Salmonella* organisms. The older the eggs are before they are collected and eaten, the more dangerous they are.<sup>13</sup> The need for care in the use of ducks' eggs is emphasized in modern cookery books, one of which gives the following advice: 'Ducks' eggs ... need to be thoroughly cooked to be safe, at least ten minutes being allowed for boiling. They can be included in cakes (except sponge mixtures) and puddings, but they should not be used for making meringues or any sweet which is cooked for only a short time or at a low temperature, nor should they be preserved or stored'.<sup>14</sup> Eggs were a prominent item in the Roman diet,<sup>15</sup> and, while they were sometimes hard-boiled (*ova elixa*)<sup>16</sup> or well cooked by other methods, they were also used in ways which would violate the modern safety rules for ducks' eggs: they were served soft-boiled (*ova hapala*);<sup>17</sup> they were made into lightly cooked, milky omelettes (*ova spongia ex lacte*);<sup>18</sup> and they were preserved and stored.<sup>19</sup> One cannot escape the conclusion that the eating of ducks' eggs by the Romans would have resulted, in a significant number of cases, in extremely unpleasant attacks of diarrhoea caused by bacterial food-poisoning.<sup>20</sup> This being so, it is hardly surprising that ducks' eggs do not seem to have been popular, though their unpopularity may have been due to their strong flavour as well as to their unhealthy reputation.

Although the eggs of other birds were sometimes eaten, hens' eggs were normally favoured by the Romans,<sup>21</sup> as they are by us. Ducks were bred for the table,<sup>22</sup> and presumably their eggs were eaten from time to time, but in the ancient sources there

<sup>12</sup> See e.g. H. Williams Smith, 'The Epizootiology of *Salmonella* Infection in Poultry', in R. F. Gordon and B. M. Freeman (edd.), *Poultry Diseases and World Economy* (Edinburgh, 1971), pp. 37–46, especially pp. 43–5.

<sup>13</sup> For information about *Salmonella* contamination of ducks' eggs I am grateful to the following: Mr R. R. Henry, Company Veterinary Adviser, Cherry Valley Farms Ltd., Lincoln; Professor T. R. Morris, Department of Agriculture, University of Reading; and Dr Debby Reynolds, Senior Veterinary Officer, Veterinary Investigation Section, Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, Tolworth, Surrey.

<sup>14</sup> *Good Housekeeping Cookery Book* (Abingdon, 1976), p. 248. I am grateful to Miss S. Dowding for bringing the passage to my attention.

<sup>15</sup> J. André, *L'alimentation et la cuisine à Rome* (Paris, 1961), pp. 152–3. Meals often began with eggs – hence the expression *ab ovo usque ad mala* (Hor. *Sat.* 1.3.6–7).

<sup>16</sup> Apicius 7.19.2.

<sup>17</sup> Apicius 7.19.3.

<sup>18</sup> Apicius 7.13.8. Such an omelette was to be served when cooked on only one side: *una parte cum fuerit coctum, in disco vertes, melle perfundis, piper aspargis et inferes*.

<sup>19</sup> Columella 8.6.

<sup>20</sup> If the Elder Pliny is to be believed, ducks might cure the illness caused by their eggs, for he alleges (*N.H.* 30.60) that looseness of the bowels is remedied by drinking drakes' blood.

<sup>21</sup> See André, *op. cit.*, p. 152.

<sup>22</sup> On the rearing of ducks, see Varro, *Rust.* 3.11.1–3 and, for a more detailed account, Columella 8.15. Recipes for cooking duck are given by Apicius 6.2.1–6.

does not appear to be any mention of their being consumed.<sup>23</sup> One may reasonably infer that ducks' eggs were not generally favoured, and they seem entirely appropriate in Statius' list alongside such items as caps made from old cloaks (line 24), faded napkins (line 25), onion skins (lines 29–30), snail shells (lines 32–33), and cloudy wine (line 39).

*University of Durham*

MARTIN F. SMITH

<sup>23</sup> André, *op. cit.*, p. 152 mentions ducks' eggs as having been eaten by the Romans, but in a footnote (n. 4) he says 'bien que le fait ne soit attesté que pour la Grèce, cf. Ériphos *ap.* Athén. 58 b', and in fact the passage quoted by Athenaeus mentions not ducks' eggs, but goose eggs. I am grateful to Professor K. D. White for confirming my belief that there are no ancient references to the eating of ducks' eggs.

### THE LUCRINE LAKE AT JUVENAL 4.141

The solution to the problem posed by the presentation of the giant turbot to Domitian is put forward by Montanus, a gourmet well qualified to adjudicate in such matters: one bite was sufficient for him to distinguish between oysters from Circeii, the Lucrine, or Richborough (Juv. 4.140–2). The text reads:

... Circeis nata forent an  
Lucrinum ad saxum Rutupinae edita fundo  
ostrea callebat primo deprendere morsu.

Oysters from Circeii, the promontory north of Formiae on the Campanian coast, are mentioned by Horace (*Sat.* 2.4.33) and by the elder Pliny (*N.H.* 32.60, 62), who also remarks on oysters from Britain (*N.H.* 9.169, 32.62; cf. Tac. *Agr.* 12.6).<sup>1</sup> But their most famous provenance, remarkable (perhaps) because it was not a strictly maritime location, was the Lucrine Lake. In Pliny's time young oysters were even imported from Brundisium to mature in the Lucrine, thereby acquiring a subtle blend of flavours (Plin. *N.H.* 9.169; cf. 32.61). So famous were the Lucrine oyster-beds that their produce could be designated simply by an adjective identifying their provenance: cf. Mart. 6.11.5 'tu Lucrina uoras, me pascit aquosa peloris', 12.48.4.<sup>2</sup>

Hence oysters from the Lucrine are precisely the right test for Montanus' palate. Yet *saxum* is an odd way to designate the lake. Discomfort is registered by Ferguson, who remarks that the Lucrine is nowhere else associated with rock(s).<sup>3</sup> The lake is not known to have contained a rock in Antiquity, either protruding or submerged,<sup>4</sup> nor

<sup>1</sup> D'Arcy Thompson, judging Richborough 'an unlikely spot for oysters', suggested that Juvenal is deploying the mannerism whereby, because Rutupiae was the chief port for traffic from the continent, it was cited *pars pro toto* for Britain in general (*A Glossary of Greek Fishes* [London, 1947], p. 192); but for evidence of oyster-shells found there in large numbers see B. W. Cunliffe, *Fifth Report on Excavations at Richborough = Reports of the Society of Antiquaries* 23 (1968), pp. 24 and 33.

<sup>2</sup> On oyster-culture in the Lucrine see J. H. D'Arms, *Romans on the Bay of Naples* (Cambridge, MA, 1970), pp. 136–7.

<sup>3</sup> J. Ferguson, *Juvenal, The Satires. Edited with Introduction and Commentary* (London, 1979), ad loc.

<sup>4</sup> On line 141 the scholia to Juvenal record 'locus brittorum (Bruttiorum *Pithoeus*)', followed by 'locus in Britannia siue ciuitas' (on *Rutupino*). It does not seem possible that the Bruttii who inhabited what is now Calabria can be meant (*RE* iii. 907–11 s.v. Bruttii [Hülse]). Professor R. G. M. Nisbet has suggested to me an excellent solution: that *brittorum* is a corruption of *Britannorum*, and that both comments by the scholiast gloss *Rutupino...fundo*. (By the seventeenth century *Pithoeus*' 'correction' had given rise to the assertion that *Lucrinum...saxum*